

ToughTimes

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Peel Police Chief Jennifer Evans said at a recent Justice Luncheon that policing is a wonderful job, different every day, loaded with career opportunities. She leads a staff of 2,000 officers and 800-plus civilians, dealing with 460,000 incidents a year, only one in five involving criminal activity. Challenges facing police include dealing with new technology, calls to help individuals with mental health problems, responding to changes in, for instance, how people get high – a breathalyzer can check a driver's alcohol level, but there's no roadside tool to reveal intake of other drugs. (Photo by Gold Media)

LATE BREAKING ITEM

Peel Police Services Board has dismissed its executive director Fred Biro and manager Lea Steenhoek. Board Chair Amrik Singh Ahluwalia is quoted as saying the Board wants to modernize and change direction. Tough Times regards these staff adjustments as the beginning of a police/public re-make. Watch for more changes. The big question: *Who is next?*

STRATEGY FOR A SAFER ONTARIO

Say what you think about the police

BY ROSEMARY KEENAN

Ontario is rewriting the Police Services Act to transform policing, and modernize community safety.

Harinder Malhi, MPP for Brampton-Springdale, invited local citizens to join her and Yasir Naqvi, Minister of Community Safety and Correctional Services, to discuss the provincial government's Strategy for a Safer Ontario. About 30 people gathered at Brampton City Hall to provide feedback and advice to the Minister.

Minister Naqvi explained that much has changed since the Police Services Act was established 25 years ago. The nature of policing and the police officer's role are different today, due to advances in technology, demands on

police to respond to calls which may require services other than policing, and the increase in police interactions with vulnerable individuals such as those suffering from mental health or addiction issues.

Raccoons in the attic or a cat stuck in a tree don't need a police officer. On the other hand, responding to a vulnerable individual who is a threat to self or others requires team expertise from police and medical and health professionals to de-escalate a situation and provide appropriate support for the person in need. Hamilton Police Service routinely has a mental health nurse riding in a police cruiser with a uniformed officer when responding to mental health calls.

See "Say what you think", page 9

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**Knights
Table**

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ToughTimes Words on the Street



Frank McLean with young friend Victor (*Tough Times* photo)

Art joins injury SIGNING ON AT THE SOUP KITCHEN

Frank McLean cut his hand using a table saw. Could have lost a thumb or finger, but pulled his fingers out in time and he will make a complete recovery, plus make more friends at feeding time at Knights Table, one of two Brampton soup kitchens. (Mississauga with about 160,000 more residents doesn't have even one soup kitchen, but that's another story.)

Everybody, including young Victor, is signing on to Frank's cast and bandages, in all kinds of colours and calligraphy.

Why is Frank at Knights Table? He has to wait for the Workers' Safety and Insurance Board to process The Papers and send him money now that he can't work for a while. That's annoying. Waiting for money can lead to poverty, much harder to heal than a sore thumb.

Also, among other tasks, Frank helps cash-poor people keep their homes in good repair.

Frank says he helps them because as a young man he drifted into drugs, was on the streets for two years, then eight years ago "gave my life to Jesus." He does volunteer work with organizations like Regeneration Outreach, Redemption Outreach, Salvation Army Street Soccer and mentoring at the Wilkinson Road Shelter for men who are homeless. And he says the YMCA was key in re-orga-

nizing his life, helped him get involved with St. Leonard's Place, which led to Wellness Success, an Ontario Works program where he learned how to run a business. Now, making home improvements is the business he's in.

Has van. Will travel

So you live in a van. You're 71, have \$1,600 a month coming in from pensions, which isn't bad compared to the incomes of some of the other people eating at Knights Table, Peel's only seven-days-a-

week three-meals-a-day soup kitchen.

So doesn't it make sense to spend the winter in Florida? It's a better place to be in a van than to be in a van in Brampton in snow and ice.

Eating at Knights Table. So what?

Hundreds of people whose Ontario homes are not on wheels, who are living on a far better income than government pensions, fly, drive, or transit to Florida for five or six months of the year. Some of them own wheel-free homes in the GTA, plus condos in the sunnier south.

Our friend just has his van. Has wheels. Will travel.

What was that, again?

He's only 55 and says "I'm forgetting stuff already. I go to the fridge and can't remember what I'm looking for." Join the club. Says he worked for 20 years, then got hooked into gambling and lost \$80,000 to casinos in a year or two. Knows folk who took out second mortgages to finance gambling. "I know people who lost everything," he says. Something to remember.

No money for me.

I attempted to obtain support from Ontario Works (OW) for myself, as the money I was receiving is meant for the children. I was surprised to discover that because the money I receive for the children exceeds what I would receive for the family, I am not eligible to receive OW support for myself. I struggle to get by every day.

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Frank H. McLean • homesolutions4u.2008@gmail.com

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ToughTimes

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1/8 page: \$155
1/4 page: \$240
1/2 page: \$430
3/4 page: \$600
Full page: \$755

A full page is approximately 10 inches wide by 12 inches deep = 120 square inches. E&OE

“FREE EDUCATION”

The rich get smarter and the poor get...

BY MICHELLE BILEK

Starting in the 2017-18 school year, the Ontario government claims to be making college and university education more affordable and accessible. But is post-secondary education “free” as the Liberal Government claims?

I attended a Town Hall with Liberal MPP Dipika Dameria (Mississauga East-Cooksville) at Sheridan College, Mississauga campus. About 40 parents, students, and interested parties came to receive clarity on the “Free Tuition” announcement made by the Ontario Liberals in the budget. Also in attendance was a representative of OSAP (Ontario Student Assistance Program), the entity that provides loans and grants to students.

So what did I and others learn from a 45-minute presentation? What was asked? What were the answers?

We know that individuals with a higher family income are more likely to attend college and university. Why? The overwhelming cost and debt load is inconceivable for low-income families, whether it is upfront costs or future long-term debt.

Right now, Ontario has the lowest student enrolment in decades, chiefly the result of a demographic shift –



Michelle Bilek

fewer young people. We also know that students leave university with an average of \$40,000 of debt. So what does a government do when a tremendous investment has been made, and our post-secondary institutions are crying for funds to profit and to pay their professors and infrastructure costs? Make it “free”...

In reality it is not free. It is certainly more accessible to students, as the student loan program has amalgamated some 20 or so grant schemes, bursary's and tax rebates/credits, which means

that students from families with income of \$50,000 or less will have tuition costs waived. In some cases students may even get their books and school fees covered, depending on the cost of the program they choose to enter. Students may still need to contribute to their education – such as transportation and living costs.

As the gentleman from OSAP said many times, it is a three-way contribution: Parents, students, and government. Families and students are expected to contribute. Education is still a “shared” responsibility. Wait a minute; doesn't the banner in front of the podium say “Free Tuition”? Yet not a single dime is added to fund the changes to OSAP.

I asked why this Liberal Government claims that post-secondary education is “free” when it is just a more accessible loan and grant program. But MPP Dameria insisted that it was free. Many in the audience didn't buy it. It seemed more of a magic trick. What about all students, free tuition? No. How many years can one access OSAP's changes for low incomes? Four years only, despite the age of the student. Will parents still benefit from tuition and education tax credits? No.

Since the Town Hall, the Ontario Government has faced criticism over the “free” tuition proposal as a number of caveats are attached. Even Premier Kathleen Wynne agreed that the term “free” may be misleading to potential students and parents. The program changes are an improvement on the current OSAP loans and grants program, but it seems that the Liberals are using public dollars to promote and further their political interests by marketing the changes as “free” tuition.

So does the government really have the best of intentions? This remains to be seen. This is a plan to make education more accessible, especially for those who are least likely to apply. Long term sustainability of the post-secondary system and the Ontario economy requires that more young people go to school. The province claims that access to education is part of a long-term strategy to tackle poverty. I do agree. But providing universal post-secondary education “free” in Ontario is not what most people will get from the Liberal Government's budget announcement.

Michelle Bilek is a member of the New Democratic Party

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END TWO-TIER WAGES

Let's turn things around – make it fair at work

BY ANDRIA BABBINGTON

It's time to turn things around for Ontario workers. In today's economy, too many people have insecure jobs, few benefits, and an income that doesn't keep up with the cost of living. Many companies don't provide decent wages or stable schedules for their employees.

For many years, unions raised the standards for almost all Canadians. Decent wages, good benefits and pensions were the standards most workers enjoyed. But the economy is changing, and we need a new balance in the laws to match that reality.

But in recent times, employers have abandoned the idea of a balance in labour relations, and have driven down the living standards of Canadian workers. CEOs are making huge bonuses while they force two-tier wages on new hires, outsource jobs to poverty wage contractors, or use temp agencies to staff a large portion of their workforce. In the service sector, particularly retail, there has been a dramatic increase in part-time work so that many people are juggling two or three jobs.

This has resulted in a huge growth of income inequality in our society. This will be the first generation of Canadians to be worse off than their parents – unless we turn things around. Throughout history it has



Andria babbington

been shown that unionization is a key factor in people having decent standards of living. In fact, you could say that the best anti-poverty program for working people is a union. It's time to fix the law and make it fair at work!

Unions and community groups are organizing around key demands for fairness. The Liberal government should:

- Change the rules to make it easier for workers to speak up or organize into a union
- Strengthen the rules to ensure workers can get a fair first contract

- Stop companies from using labour disputes or restructuring to take away workers' jobs

And Employment Standards should require:

- All work by temp agencies paid at the same rate and benefits as permanent work
- Paid sick days
- Secure decent hours and paid vacation
- An end to misclassification of workers as "independent contractors"
- Lifting all wages above poverty

The Ontario government has started a process to consider some of these changes. It is called the "Changing Workplace Review". A panel of experts toured the province to hear suggestions and will soon issue a report with their ideas on how to respond to the new reality of work. Then it is up to our politicians to take action and start working to fix the laws. We want MPP's to become champions of the working families who live in their ridings – especially in Peel Region.

Readers can find out more about this important issue, and how to contact their own MPP, at www.makeitfair.ca

- Strengthen successor rights so workers can maintain their conditions when contracts are flipped

Andria Babbington is vice-president of the Toronto and York Region Labour Council and an organizer for Unite HERE Local 75. She has worked and organized widely in the hotel industry.

Know Your Rights @ Work Workshop

- ➔ Are You Covered by the Employment Standards Act
- ➔ What is Employment Insurance & Do I Qualify?
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Labour Community Services of Peel

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United Way
Peel Region

Three more nickels

MINIMUM WAGE GOES UP

Ontario will raise the general minimum wage from \$11.25 to \$11.40 on October 1, 2016 - the highest minimum of any province in Canada.

Minimum-wage increases are tied to Ontario's Consumer Price Index, which measures changes in the cost of food, shelter, housekeeping, clothing, transport, health and personal care, recreation, education, reading, boozing and smoking.

Most minimum wage earners work in hotels and food, retail and farming – where the wage business can be confusing.

Minimum wage rates for liquor servers go up only a dime – from \$9.80 to \$9.90. However, students under 18 working 28 or fewer hours a week when school is in, or working during school breaks or summer holidays, get

the 15 cents – from \$10.55 to \$10.70. People working in their own homes for an employer, also get the 15 cents, going up from \$12.40 to \$12.55 an hour.



POLITICS

Taking care of Caledon

BY DAVID TILSON

Many outstanding community organizations throughout Peel provide invaluable services to ensure the needs of our community are met. One such organization performing exceptional work for the many residents it serves is Caledon Community Services (CCS).

CCS provides a range of programs and services to meet the needs for health care, transportation, employment, training, newcomer resettlement, small business development, and social services for individuals, families, and small businesses throughout Caledon and surrounding areas. Its reach is extensive, with "something for everyone," which is abundantly clear when you walk through the organization's doors in Bolton.

One of the services offered by CCS is the Learning Innovation for Future Employment (LIFE) for Youth Program, providing young people with essential skills and experience for them to find meaningful employment or return to school. Workshops build job skills, such as time management and effective communication, and young people can obtain work placements with local employers. The Canadian government has supported this exemplary program for many years and as the Member of Parliament for Dufferin-Caledon, I've had the pleasure of announcing funding support for it, and to attend graduation ceremonies. I've heard firsthand how this program has changed the lives of participants who were often hired full-time by their placement employers or returned to school after completing the program.

Another program offered by CCS is Language Instruction for Newcomers to Canada (LINC). It provides free language-instruction classes to adult newcomers.

One of the newest offerings by CCS is The Exchange. It not only distributes nutritious, wholesome food to anyone in the community who needs it, but provides training and educational programs in food preparation and healthy eating. At 55 Healey Road in Bolton, it's also a



David Tilson

terrific social space. Many other general interest courses are offered, such as yoga, which brings even more people in to meet and connect with neighbours. In addition, The Exchange serves as a site to provide support for those seeking assistance in finding employment or affordable housing. I was invited to tour The Exchange and was immensely impressed by the welcoming atmosphere, as well as the many activities and programs that were being enjoyed by groups of all ages during my visit.

CCS is also widely known for both Chez Thrift and The ReUstore, both located in Bolton. The stores accept gently-used items from the community which are then sold at both locations. The proceeds from sales support the many programs offered by CCS.

Senior citizens can also look to CCS for programs and services developed to assist seniors to remain active, engaged, and to live independently. The wide range of services includes community-assisted living, respite care, supportive housing, a transitional care centre, and transportation.

Many other programs and services are offered by CCS, including: job seeker services, employer services, counseling and care coordination, and more.

I applaud the extraordinary work performed by CCS and its wonderful staff, management, and volunteers. Their immense efforts and unwavering dedication to delivering high quality programs and services to our community and surrounding areas is truly remarkable. I encourage you to learn more about CCS by visiting www.ccs4u.org and to find out how you can get involved.

David Tilson is the Member of Parliament for Dufferin-Caledon

Build your future – get a summer job A MESSAGE FOR BRAMPTON YOUTH

BY GURPREET S. DHILLON

When I was younger, the summer used to be my favourite time of year – the school year had finally ended and I had two months ahead of me to enjoy the warm weather and play with my friends.

But my parents always encouraged me to find a summer job or volunteer in the community. Years later, I see the value of their decision – to teach me responsibility and commitment, while I earned a small income and learned the value of money. I also developed valuable work skills and built my resume.

Summer jobs are available throughout the City of Brampton in a wide range of departments and positions. It's the perfect opportunity for our young people to get involved in the community and city.

Learning different skills now is a good way for youth to be more flexible and adaptable when applying for career jobs after completing degrees or certifications at university or college.

Job opportunities for Brampton's at-risk youth are very important because it helps provide positive outlets for our young people, while exposing them to potential mentors and leaders to help guide them through their tough times. These jobs also help our youth get a foot in the door, creating a fair work environment for everyone. Having access to jobs within the



Coun. Gurpreet S. Dhillon

City of Brampton is a positive relationship between the Corporation and our citizens.

The City of Brampton accepts applications for jobs year-round, but with schools closed and semesters completed, the summer is a great way for youth to work full-time or part-time, or volunteer and start building experience and resumes.

Go to the City of Brampton's website: www.brampton.ca/EN/City-Hall/Employment/Seasonal/Pages/welcome.aspx. Or instead of applying online, apply in person. Dropping off a resume at City Hall or one of the City's recreation centres develops your one-on-one interactions with staff and boosts your confidence, communication skills and networking.

Because job vacancies are filled quickly, it is best to apply sooner rather than later.

One of my election campaign promises was to promote more job growth and employment opportunities for our youth.

Gurpreet S. Dhillon is city councillor for Brampton Wards 9 and 10

Hepatitis C

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- Sharing drug equipment such as needles, filters, tourniquets, water, syringes, cookers, alcohol swabs, acidifiers
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- Involved in medical procedures including immunization in hepatitis C endemic countries

Contact:

Bloom Clinic
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Call today for information or
to book a free test.



ToughTimes Serving Peel's Muslim Community

Some Muslims in Peel feel that they and their religion are misrepresented and misinterpreted by politicians like Donald Trump in the U.S. and earlier by Stephen Harper when he was prime minister of Canada. The word "Muslim" has been tied in the media to attacks on civilian targets outside the war zones of the Middle East.

Does this affect local Muslims? And how should they respond?

Tough Times offers this special section to serve and to advocate for Peel's Muslim community. It features the words of Muslims, from newcomers, to Canadian-born, to business women, to those who walk on the edge of fear because of the words of people like Trump.

As it happens, all the Muslim contributors to this Muslim section of *Tough Times* are women.

We must talk to our children – and they must talk to us

MUSLIM COUNCIL SPEAKS OUT

An announcement from the Muslim Council of Peel "unequivocally denounces all terror attacks" and "calls on youth services, law enforcement and public safety to collaborate to support youth and young adults who feel impacted by violence and oppression in our local communities" and it asks all adults to communicate openly with children and youth about such traumatic events.

"We are appealing to our local educators, counsellors and parents to help children and youth discuss what they are seeing on social media and in the news. It is especially important that children and youth feel they can express their opinions in safe and constructive ways. We as adults should engage them in creating the understanding that some individuals resort to terror and violence to advance a cause, and that we must always stand united for peaceful and just resolution to conflicts. The acts of a few do not represent all Muslims and Islam in any way."

Rabia Khedr, executive director of the Muslim Council of Peel.

Muslim women in business



Above: Chasing Perfection is the title of a new business that spreads good taste in many ways — with candies as shown here, and with banners, decor, gift baskets and more. Presiding over these services are womenpreneurs Khadija Moinuddin (left) and Anisa Saeed, both in their twenties. Their venture began in summer, 2015, and they report their business is beginning to grow. (*Tough Times photo*)

Right: Saamiya Niazi, who designs flowers and flower arrangements for Ba-laj ZArt, was a participant in Muslim Womenpreneurs at the Milan Banquet Hall, Mississauga. (*Tough Times photo*)



A coffee shop affair

HOW A MUSLIM WOMAN SEES LIFE IN TODAY'S POLITICAL CLIMATE

BY FARHEEN KHAN

With people like Donald Trump and Ted Cruz speaking so offensively south of the border, on top of Stephen Harper's federal election speeches, Islamophobic rhetoric is no surprise. What's clear is that while hate crimes seemed few and far between during last year's federal election, they are now emerging.

Here's my personal experiences of walking into branches of a famous coffee chain over the last few weeks:

Encounter # 1 – As I walked into the coffee shop to pick up my coffee, everyone – I mean everyone

– in the place began to watch. One would think that I had something on my face, but that wasn't the case at all. Sadly it was my hijab.

Encounter #2 – I walked into a coffee shop one morning and people were friendly which was great! My community partner and I began a business meeting. In a few minutes I noticed two elderly women sitting directly behind him. I ended up making eye contact with one of the women and she quickly looked away. Then ever so slowly, as I pretended not to watch, she nudged her friend

and pointed at me. Not knowing what else to do, I smiled at both of them. They looked at me with what I felt was sheer disgust. Sometimes no matter what you do, you can't win.

Encounter #3 – In the mall, a man and I were walking separately and slowly towards coffee.

Then he started to speed up and soon he was looking back at me and speeding up some more. I guessed that he was speeding up because he thought that I was following him. I was tempted to walk into a shop in the mall simply to calm him down. But I continued to walk and made my way into the coffee shop as usual. I hope he realized that that was my

only intention.

I hope these encounters open your eyes to the amount of education that is required to ensure that all Canadians understand that what you see on TV about Muslims does not represent 99.9% of Muslims in Canada and around the world.

If I'm at the coffee shop, it's because I want a coffee. Period.

Farheen Khan is a writer and author of two books that speak about her experiences of being an hijab-wearing Canadian Muslim woman living in a post 9/11 world. She's a motivational speaker and community advocate for the rights of women and vulnerable people.

Settling in – growing up Canadian and Muslim

BY SHAILA KIBRIA CARTER

Back in the 60's, our fathers and mothers graduated from university and were ready to start their families. As they were establishing themselves as new immigrants in Canada, they realized that there were no masjids – mosques – in Peel.

Basements of homes, recreation centres, and community halls were rented, used to pray in, gather in and network in. Along with places of worship, Saturday and Sunday Arabic schools popped up around the city.

Being in an English-language school system, Muslim children were not learning Arabic, the language of their religion.

Parents worried that the traditions, culture and practices of the religion would die if their children did not learn how to worship Islam.

Hence, along with other Muslim children, this became an integral part of my childhood. I learned math and English and all other subjects of the provincial curriculum at school during the weekdays, but while non-Muslim children were watching Saturday morning cartoons, my brother and I joined other Muslim children at the Islamic Forum of Canada to learn Islam from Shaykh Faisal Abdur-Razak....and then drive to T.L. Kennedy Secondary School the next day to learn Arabic on Sundays while non-Muslim children went to church.

In the summers, my brother and I attended summer camp at ISNA in Mississauga. A school bus would pick us up and take us to a day full of learning, fun, and really great experiences. I learned about the "hijab" there, or "modesty", and how Canadian Muslims can learn to be modest, intelligent and contribute to society. Sheikh Abdullah Idris was our principal...and it was the first time I met a Muslim who is not Brown, but Black, and to this day, I love him because he taught me that I was not alone, or that Muslims were not this small group of Brown people only, but that Muslims are Black, Brown, White...and every race out there.

I didn't realize what a global religion it was and is. It was important for me to gain

these insights as a child... in those days, we didn't have the resources, internet and books we have now to learn about Islam and our roots, our heritage, and our religion. It was important to find really good leaders that explained Islam. Sheikh Abdullah Idris remained an integral part of my life, performing the marriage ceremony for my husband Alex Carter and me at the Malton Islamic Centre.

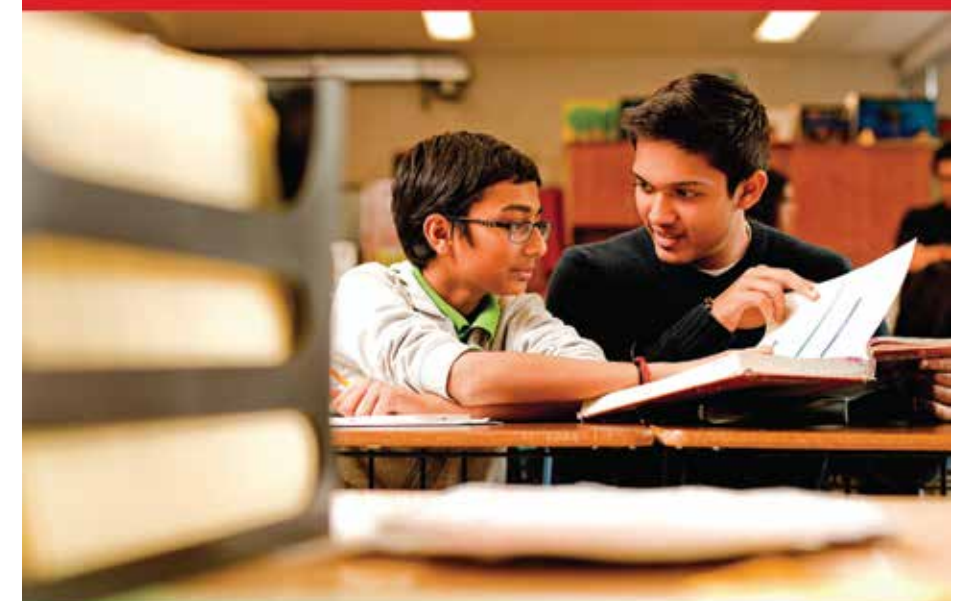
According to Statistics Canada, 9.4% of Peel's population were Muslims. Now, in 2016, the population may be closer to 10%. With such a diverse population, it is no surprise that full time Islamic schools have opened as well, following Ontario's curriculum, plus Arabic and Islam – similar in administration to Catholic schools.

Today, young people gather at weekends

for youth groups. My children attend Imam Hamid Slimi's youth group in Mississauga's Sayeda Khadija Centre every Sunday morning. In a climate where Muslims were and are being labelled as "terrorists", it was crucial for me to find safe places for my children to express their thoughts, talk about issues, play basketball and just "hang" and "be" with other teenagers in a good environment. What is even more inspiring, is that University of Toronto's Emmanuel College offers an Islamic Studies program under Professor Nevin Reda, a beloved leader in our community. She performed my son's aqeeqah (similar to baptism or a christening, but for Muslims). How great is that? There is support for Islamic education all through a child's life now in Canada so that we can be Canadian Muslims with all the resources needed.

Shaila Kibria-Carter is Muslim and a social activist in Peel

Behind every changed life is someone who made it happen.



You can be that someone.
Get involved at unitedwaypeel.org



Together, we are possibility.



Not a one-way street, not any more

BY PATTI ANN TRAINOR

My son had just parked his car and was walking towards the house as I opened the door to let our dog out. A Peel Police cruiser drove slowly by.

My son seemed annoyed and stood on the sidewalk staring down the street at the cruiser. I stood inside the front porch with the door open watching him and our dog. Seconds later, the cop car came barreling down our one-way street in the wrong direction and stopped in front of our house.

One of the two white male police officers rolled down his window and asked what my son was doing. My son wanted to know why he was asking, why was he driving the wrong way down the street and why they had been following him. The other cop jumped out of the car and came towards him, looking up at me and asking "Do you know him, Ma'am?"

I remained silent in my dismay at the power play taking place before my eyes.

My son asked for their badge numbers and I heard one of the officers say to him "Can't you read?" He eventually got the badge numbers and told them that he would complain to their supervisor. They drove away.

Once in the house, my son told me that if I hadn't been there he would not have said a word and would have come into the house to be safe. It was then that I realized how great God is to have me take the dog out at the perfect time to witness this, my son's 27th interaction with police because of racial profiling. Because I was there, he could be brave and truthful and stand up for his rights.

Anti-Black racism is such a problem that I doubt the new regulations on



Patti Ann Trainor took part in the Black Lives Matter march on Washington in December, 2014. It was not clear then that the Ontario Black Lives Matter movement would force the provincial government to amend regulations, undertake a review of the Police Services Act, and engage the public in in-depth discussion. (Photo supplied by Ms. Trainor)

street checks will make any difference. The police will be able to use the exemption that "if the officer has a reasonable suspicion that the interaction is necessary to their investigation of an offence that has been committed or

that the officer reasonably suspects will be committed."

Perhaps the officers thought it was suspicious for a young Black man to approach a house with an older white woman at the door. This demonstrates

the racist lens that police have towards young Black men. If we had more Black officers and better-trained white officers another view would be possible.

This is certainly not my first encounter with police who found something suspicious about Black and white people together.

Back in the 1980s, a black male friend was driving me home from a birthday party. The police stopped us, told him that he was driving too slowly, took the keys to his car and drove away. He had not been drinking and had not been driving too slowly. We had to walk several kilometres late at night to find a phone and call a cab. (No cell phones back then.)

I applaud the Ministry of Community and Public Safety for forming a roundtable with knowledge of human rights, community needs, issues affecting youth, privacy laws, curriculum development, policing and other relevant fields to provide input to the Ontario Police College on the development of new training for police officers.

Other relevant fields should include the impact of anti-Black racism on the lives of Black Ontarians and how to remedy them. For my son, being stopped by police officers 27 times in his 26-year life results in anger, distrust, and fear. The way those two officers lorded over him... yet he is a light skinned man. It is worse for our darker-skinned men.

My son is a successful businessman and university graduate who works hard and drives a very nice car. Yet he has been stopped by Peel police on his way to see clients, and been accused – but never charged – with having drugs.

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A new look to policing

Peel Police claim they are the first police force in Ontario to implement changes so as to comply with new regulations on collecting identifying information – carding.

Peel Police Chief Jennifer Evans says all required changes to language, definitions and policy were implemented well ahead of the targeted dates set by the Ministry. Training.

Chief Evans said that "police and community interaction is an important component of community safety and I have never condoned random or arbitrary Street Checks. Peel Police are the first to comply with the changes because I cannot allow the negative attention on Street Checks to continue to jeopardize the excellent work and reputation of this police service and our relationship with the community we serve."

Beyond carding – working with the police



Questions and comments from the public:

“Police need to have a **presence in the community** they serve. Community policing, engaging in a positive way with community members, would help prevent crime. This could be playing basketball with local youth, or talking with people on the street. It’s about showing respect and developing a level of trust with members of the community. Some communities, especially immigrant groups, see policing differently, so that police are not the first point of contact in crises. Police must find a way, so that these communities feel welcomed and confident in **reaching out for help**.

“Police reported that they **do not collect data on race, gender, sexual orientation**. Minister Naqvi said that the reformed police services act will have a stipulation on data collection.

“Peel Police Services Board should reflect the community it serves. Members of the Board should understand the local issues, be responsive to deputations, and follow through with recommendations coming from citizens. What are the qualifications required for a person to be a member of the Police Services Board to ensure that members fulfill their role?

“Police Boards need to be accountable and responsible as agents of **civilian oversight**. They also need to be treated seriously by police services.

“Recently in Peel, a majority of the Board voted to stop the controversial practice of ‘**carding**’, which disproportionately impacts black youth. The police chief chose not to take direction from the Board.”

A participant noted: “On two very public occasions chiefs of **police have defied a direct order** from their boards. The result of this defiance was in part the tipping point for the province to step in with new regulations governing community interaction and this well-needed review of the police services act.” Funds need to be allocated federally and provincially to ensure a community has sufficient services. For example, **funding must be available for mental health professionals** to be part of the team that responds to

emergency calls.

A speaker pointed out that before 1974 the Bank of Canada provided **near interest-free loans** to the Canadian government. This enabled the government to put taxpayer dollars towards public services such as highways, public transportation systems, airports, the Canada pension plan, and universal healthcare. After 1974, **the banking system changed** so that loans for government projects had to be taken from private banks at current interest rates. She said the result is a burden of millions of dollars in government debt on the people of Canada, with over a trillion taxpayer dollars since 1974 used just to pay interest on the debt. <http://qualicumstitute.ca/federal-debt/>

“A phone number other than 911 could be used to report emergencies that do not require police.”

FOOTNOTES:

“**Civilian oversight**” of the OPP in Caledon is provided by Peel Police Services Board.

The **seven members** (the most permitted by the Police Services Act) of Peel Police Services Board include a Black woman, a Sikh man who is chair, the mayors of Brampton and Mississauga, chair of Peel Region, and two more civilians.

www.peelpoliceboard.ca/board_members.html

About 400 of the 800 members of Hamilton Police Service have been **trained in de-escalation** and response to mental health crises. The aim is to train all officers. Find out more at www.stjoes.ca/newsevents/news/~1536-Mobile-Crisis-Rapid-Response-Team

According to the Police Services Act, “Board members **shall not interfere** with the police force’s operational decisions and responsibilities or **with the day-to-day operation of the police force**, including the recruitment and promotion of police officers.” O. Reg. 421/97, s. 2.

“Board members shall discharge their duties in a manner that **respects the dignity of individuals** and in accordance with the *Human Rights Code* and the Charter of Rights and Freedoms (Canada).” O. Reg. 421/97, s. 9.

www.ontario.ca/laws/statute/90p15

Say what you think, cont. from page 1

Naqvi named four pillars to his Ministry’s new approach:

First, is to establish a pattern where police and community services work together to respond to local needs. Various government ministries are also directed to collaborate with each other and work together to address community needs, for example youth services, health services, and education.

The second pillar is to review the role of the police in terms of the training they receive and job expectations. Most police have college or university training. Is that enough? What type of training should they have?

The third pillar focuses on civil-

ian oversight of the police. What are the gaps in our present system? For example, Ontario Provincial Police (OPP) is not governed by a police board and has no civilian oversight. What is the role of a police board? Who should sit on the board?

The fourth pillar of the plan is to address First Nations policing, to provide better police services and culturally-responsive policing.

Jobs, education, poverty reduction and social inclusion are necessary parts of the plan, thus the need for all levels of government to work with local communities.

Rosemary Keenan is a retired teacher and political activist in Brampton.

FLUORIDE

Drink Peel's tap water and smile

BY DR. SANJUKTA MOHANTA

A healthy mouth requires:

- daily oral hygiene
- eating a healthy diet low in sugar
- visiting the dentist regularly
- drinking fluoridated water

We are fortunate in Peel to have fluoride in our drinking water. It is safe, it strengthens our teeth and it is cost effective. It is endorsed by Health Canada, all three mayors in Peel, Ontario's Health Minister, Peel's own Medical Officer of Health, the Ontario Dental Association, the Canadian Dental Association, plus many other health associations across Canada and worldwide.

Fluoride is a mineral that occurs naturally in water. It decreases decay by being incorporated in tooth enamel. Community water fluoridation is adjusting the level of fluoride in our water to the optimal level to prevent decay without causing harm. It was listed as one of the top 10 public health achievements in the 20th century by the U.S Centers for Disease



Control (CDC).

A joint letter from Dr. Eric Hoskins, Minister of Health and Long-Term Care, and Dr. David Williams, Ontario's Chief Medical Officer of Health, stated, "The CDC estimates that for every \$1 invested in community water fluoridation, \$38 is saved in dental treatment. Removing fluoride from drinking water will place those least able to afford

or access dental treatment at a much higher risk for oral health problems. The health benefits of drinking water fluoridation extend to all residents in a community, regardless of age, socio-economic status, education or employment."

Peel Regional Council has a Community Water Fluoridation Committee that is discussing the future

of community water fluoridation in Peel.

We need to ensure Peel continues to fluoridate its water. Contact your Ward Councillor and Mayor and let them know that we should maintain water fluoridation in Peel, as it helps the whole community, especially those who cannot afford dental care.

Sign the fluoride petition to prevent municipalities from removing fluoride from our water. Access it online, sign it and mail it to Bob Delaney, MPP for Mississauga-Streetsville, who is promoting community water fluoridation for all municipalities in Ontario.

<http://www.bobdelaney.com/wp-content/uploads/2016/03/Fluoridation2016.pdf>

Enjoy a drink of tap water and be thankful we have fluoridated water in Peel.

Cheers

Dr. Sanjukta Mohanta is a dentist in a community health centre in Brampton, and is president of Halton Peel Dental Association for 2015/16. She has been practicing for 17 years.

Affordable-rent condos

Peel Region plans to buy 40 condominiums in 2015-16 to rent to individuals or families who need affordable housing.

Capital is available through the Ontario government's Development Charges and Investment in Affordable Housing (IAH) Extension, and the Region believes the plan will provide "fast access to affordable rental housing for 40 households."

It's a pilot project, which means more condos could be bought if the idea works.

MUSLIM WOMEN IN POLITICS

The Federation of Muslim Women (FMW) is "Celebrating Muslim Women in Politics."

At a recent event aimed "to bring together a diverse network of women to inspire collaboration and engagement," Dr. Salha Jeizan, FMW president, said: "We appreciate the fact that Canada is back on course embracing differences as a part of our Canadian identity. And we are ready, willing and able to work locally and nationally to shape the future of this great country we are proud to call home."

The Federation named Mississauga's Zunera Ishaq as its Woman of the Year. Ishaq is the Muslim woman who refused to remove her hijab at a citizenship ceremony, and whose action was upheld by the courts.

FMW spokeswoman Rabia Khedr noted: "Zunera stood her ground and did her part to protect women's rights and the true essence of equality. Whether we wear our hair, hijab or niqab, we don't want laws regulating


a dress code in a free and democratic society."

Certificates were also presented to several grassroots women mobilizers, whose work the Federation believes is often unrecognized.



Fawzia Koofi – member of parliament in Kabul, Afghanistan and vice-president of the National Assembly.

(Photo: Wikimedia)



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VOLUNTEERS NEEDED

Counting the homeless – to find them a place to live

People who observe poverty in Peel know that there are homeless people all over the Region – living with friends, in shelters, rooming houses, in cars, or in the woods somewhere.

Nobody knows how many there are.

That is about to change, and you may be able to help.

People who are homeless, or who care about those without shelter, are invited to volunteer to work in Registration Week, June 4 to June 10 this year.

It's part of a national plan to house 20,000 of Canada's most vulnerable people by July 2018.

The plan in Peel is to have teams of volunteers find people who have no home, learn their names, find out where they can be contacted another time, get

the information necessary to get a roof over their heads.

More volunteers are needed to handle data entry, so the information can be easily used.

Groups involved include United Way, Our Place Peel, St. Leonard's Place, the Region of Peel, the Salvation Army, Supportive Housing in Peel, Peel Poverty Reduction Strategy and your own Tough Times.

Flyers are being handed out that say 50,000 Canadians are "hidden homeless", staying temporarily with family or friends. 235,000 citizens are homeless during any given year.

Want to know more?

Phone Jennifer Turner at 905-602-3646 or Ross Harding at 905-457-3611 ext. 238.

A LETTER FROM ONTARIO WORKS

Where the child support cash goes

In the April issue of Tough Times, a letter to the editor asked what happened to money paid in child support via Ontario Works. The writer claimed that she was not receiving it. So where did it go?

Ontario Works (run by the Region of Peel in Mississauga, Brampton and Caledon) replies.

Hello Reader:

Calculating eligibility can be a complicated process.

For child support, currently under legislation, child support is deducted dollar for dollar from a recipient's monthly entitlement.

Ontario Works understands that although there may be a child support agreement in place, child support is not always in regular pay. In these cases, the support order is filed with the Family Responsibility Office (FRO) and they work to collect the outstanding support from the parent or the payor.

Ontario Works wants to ensure that parents who are not receiving their regular support payments are not penalized by having their assistance reduced when they are not receiving the support payments. In these cases,

we request that the parent complete an assignment which we will forward to FRO.

This assignment advises FRO that if they are successful in collecting support and it is for the period that the custodial parent was in receipt of assistance, that the support received for those months, should be directed to Ontario Works and not issued to the recipient. In a case where they were able to collect more than Ontario Works issued, those funds would be directed back to the custodial parent or the payee.

For example, if Ontario Works deems a recipient to be eligible for only \$131, should FRO collect from the payor a larger amount, only \$131 would be directed to OW, and only for the months that the payee was in receipt of assistance. The remainder would be directed to the payee by whatever means they have set up with FRO, whether that be cheque or DBD. For this reason, it is important to advise FRO of any changes to address or banking information.

Got it? Thought not. Keep those letters coming.

Wanna join a gang? JOIN THIS INSTEAD

Brampton Multicultural Community Centre (BMC) is starting a program called New Direction, for 12 to 20-year-olds in Peel who are in, or might join, a gang.

BMC will meet each youngster, accompanied by family members, who will suggest friends and others to produce a plan to keep the young person out of trouble (that means not in a gang), and then make sure the plan works.

Plans could include 20 hours of life skills training and 30 hours of employment-readiness training if required, plus other training courses and tutoring.

Bus tickets will be provided for weekly meetings, regular income for other needs such as recreational activities, professional clothing for employment, extra-curricular classes.

Want to know more? New Direction can be reached at 905-790-8482 ext. 324 or email newdirection@bmccentre.org

Attawapiskat re-visited

The April 2016 issue of Tough Times included an article about how students at Notre Dame and St. Edmund Campion Secondary Schools, back in 2008, signed petitions, discussed, and a few went to Ottawa, in support of the children of Attawapiskat who needed a new school.

Eight years on, Attawapiskat remains in the news, with children and youth entering suicide pacts, some of them carrying through, a state of emergency declared by the band council, the federal and other levels of government sending in counsellors and mental health workers.

The opportunities for teenagers in Peel to help the people of Attawapiskat appear less direct today.

Both Dufferin-Peel Catholic District School Board and Peel District School Board offer lessons to their students on

aboriginal issues.

For the Peel board, secondary schools incorporate indigenous issues into history, geography and social studies, with six schools in the Peel board offering courses involving current aboriginal issues in preparation for college or university.

Getting ready for the next school year, 35 teachers recently took part in workshops in learning and teaching about First Nations, Metis, and Inuit peoples.

The Catholic board offers special courses on aboriginal issues in 13 of its 26 secondary schools.

Topics include aboriginal art – painting, sculpture, dance, storytelling; historical and contemporary legal, political and social issues; contemporary aboriginal writing; identity, sovereignty, challenges faced world-wide.

More than a food bank...

The primary way that The Mississauga Food Bank feeds hungry people is through six neighbourhood food banks – The Compass, Salvation Army Erin Mills, Seva Food Bank on Wolfedale and in Malton, and St Mary's Food Bank at Coopers and Dundas). Anyone in need can go once a month to receive at least seven to 10 days' worth of groceries at no cost.

Mississauga Food Bank also provides food to 44 other programs in Mississauga: breakfast clubs, after-school programs, snack and hot meal programs/soup kitchens, emergency shelters and seniors' programs. These supplies enable agencies to spend on other needs, and increases the amount of food available to needy people.

Non-profit agencies in Mississauga helping those living in poverty, are invited to contact Jon Davey at jon@themississaugafoodbank.org to find out how to receive food to distribute to clients.



The **ABC'S** of Physical Literacy

Just as your children need to learn their ABC's before they can read a book, they need to learn basic movement skills before they can participate in physical activities or sports. If they learn these skills early they are more likely to want to be active now and for the rest of their lives.

Experts recommend that children from one to four years of age have at least 180 minutes of physical activity per day.

- Turn up the music and dance with your kids.
You can even do this when you're making dinner.
- Create an obstacle course in your living room or in your local playground. Kids love a challenge!

For more information, find us on Facebook at **facebook.com/parentinginpeel**

Helping You Find the Right Child Care

Licensed home and centre-based child care providers in Peel:

- are required by the Province of Ontario to provide safe and healthy environments
- help children learn and grow in healthy ways
- support children with special needs

Fee subsidy is available to parents and caregivers of children 0-12 years who need help to pay for licensed child care in Peel.

For licensed child care options in Peel, call 905-890-9432 or visit cdrcp.com

To apply for fee subsidy, call 905-793-9200 or visit peelregion.ca/children

To inquire about special needs resources in licensed child care, call 905-791-7800 ext. 7627 or email SNAP-PIRS@peelregion.ca

